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NOFORN
SIPDIS

E.O. 12958: DECL: 09/18/2029
TAGS: [PREL](#) [PTER](#) [BE](#)
SUBJECT: BELGIUM MAY NOT BE READY FOR GUANTANAMO DETAINEE
TRANSFER ON PROPOSED DATE

REF: DAO E-MAIL 9/15/2009

Classified By: POL/ECON Counselor Richard Eason, Reasons 1.4 (b) and (d).

(1) (S/NF) SUMMARY: The Belgian government is not yet certain it will be ready to receive the Guantanamo detainee it accepted on the proposed date of September 25, 2009. According to a senior diplomat working the issue for the MFA, Belgium will work with a non-government organization and wants to take the time to ensure that the transfer goes well. The Belgians also wants a written version of the DOD guidance, "Detainee Movement Operations: General Procedures" and to develop a coordinated plan on public/statements and the press. The diplomat said that he was concerned about the emotional and psychological state of the detainee who would have flown from Cuba via another stop, in restraints and blackout goggles. END SUMMARY.

12. (S/NF) On September 18, 2009, POL/ECON Counselor called on Ambassador Marc VandenReeck regarding the proposed transfer of the detainee Belgium has agreed to take from Guantanamo. P/ECOUNS relayed the proposed transfer date of September 25, of which VanDenReeck had just learned. VanDenReeck said that his government could not yet commit to such an early transfer date. He wondered why Special Envoy Daniel Fried had not passed the date when he had met with the Foreign Minister's Chief of Staff the day previously. He said such little notice might cause Belgium problems because Belgium would be working with a non-governmental organization on the transfer and need time to coordinate the details with that NGO. Belgium wanted to be certain that the transfer was "done in a proper way." He did not, however, say that the proposed date would be impossible, only that his government needed time to review whether it would be possible to meet such a date.

13. (S/NF) P/ECOUNS referred to the "Detainee Movement Operations: General Procedures" relayed by ref e-mail. VanDenReeck requested a releasable version of the document (which was classified SECRET/NOFORN with no releasability to Belgium). VanDenReeck had several areas of concern. He wanted to know how the detainee would be restrained during the entire flight and the length of the flight. He was concerned that the length of the flight and whether the restraints would cause the detainee to be highly stressed upon arrival in Belgium. He also wanted to be able to reassure the NGO of the state of the detainee upon arrival. He wanted a written version of the Detainee Movement Operations document also to be able to refer to in case there were subsequent misunderstandings.

14. (S/NF) VanDenReeck also said that the public statement/press arrangements would need to be coordinated and that Belgium would make a proposal for the arrangements. He was not certain Belgium would be able to agree that the DOD upload a statement that the transfer had occurred immediately afterwards. Belgium might need to have that wait for a day

or longer to publicly acknowledge that the transfer had occurred. VanDenReeck was concerned that a U.S. release of confirmation of the transfer before Belgium had done so could cause very serious political reverberations in the governing coalition.

¶5. (S/NF) VanDenReeck would be briefing the Foreign Minister and will provide the Embassy with a coordinated response as soon as possible.

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